

**CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION
MINUTES**

January 12, 2015

5:25 P.M. Vice-Mayor Durossette called the January 12, 2015 Study Session to order with the following in attendance:

ROLL CALL Council Members Durossette, Kline, Ryno

Mayor Vierra arrived at 5:27 p.m.

Excused Council Member Lane

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Discussion of Ceres Youth Baseball (CYB) and Ceres Youth Soccer Organization (CYSO) agreement.

City Manager, Toby Wells provided a brief background. Staff is seeking Council direction on how they'd like to proceed, with the contract having expired 12/31/2014.

Deputy Director of Public Works, Jeremy Damas presented the staff report. He would like to extend the agreement through the end of this year (12/31/2015). He explained that there are two separate agreements; one with CYSO, where Smokies concessionaires gives 15% of concessions revenue to the City; CYB does not. The reason being is that they do a lot of field maintenance.

Discussion ensued regarding annual costs and revenues associated with the Costa Fields baseball complex. Mike Borges, past president for CYB and long-term CYB Board member reported that the total revenues for the snack bar alone, prior to paying wages, product and license fees, was approximately \$97,229. After fees, product costs, and wages to run the snack bar of \$91,136, that left a profit of about \$6,000 for last year. Therefore, with a proposal of paying 15% of concessions, CYB wouldn't make profit, as there are still umpires and other expenses to be paid for.

Mr. Borges stated that a written proposal from CYB has been presented to Council this evening that they haven't had an opportunity to review. It includes ways to increase revenues, and share the increase with the City.

Mr. Wells explained that the primary challenge is, there are real costs; some of those are absorbed by CYB and we don't have an accounting for that. We're trying to find the balance between those real costs and make sure it's a fair and equitable arrangement. How do we show the full accounting for the maintenance that's necessary to carry out the operation of CYB and then also have it open for City activities? It's a balancing act.

Mr. Wells conveyed staff's recommendation to extend the agreement that's currently in place, but is also looking for direction from Council for policy direction on how to structure this agreement.

Mayor Vierra asked Mr. Wells if he and staff would like some time to dive into this. Mr. Wells felt it would be worthwhile for CYB to give their proposal, give all of us time to digest those two options, and then have Council give direction as to what they'd like staff to do. Mayor stated that he wasn't sure we'll come to a resolution tonight, but he understands where both sides are coming from.

Mr. Wells pointed out two options and asked Council to consider if they're willing to allow CYB to have control of fields all year round? The fundamental question is, what is the best way to utilize these fields? Policy direction is needed.

Mayor Vierra expressed concern with CYB taking over for the whole year, which would prevent citizens' ability to utilize the fields at any time, unless through CYB. What we're looking for is equality to help out with expenses. All of the City's costs are being scrutinized. The last thing he wants to do is take away the ability for a child in Ceres to play baseball in Ceres. This is not an easy subject. What he wants to achieve, is a balance, so it's a neutral cost for the city. If Mr. Wells and staff can come back with something that's more palatable, because this has to be a bit of give and take.

6:14 P.M. Mayor Vierra opened the public hearing.

- Jim Perneti – Ceres resident

Mr. Perneti stated he has coached at Ceres High School for 28 years and with CYB, and he still coaches. He explained that one of the things this CYB proposal does, is give them a chance to play baseball with a group of 9 boys without having to pay \$72 in the off season. He further explained that CYB could have something similar to TRP and generate revenue for the City and provide a place for kids to play baseball. He would like to see fields open all the time, but understands they probably can't. However, the idea of having a CYB volunteer with a key that can unlock the fields and supervise the kids is a good idea. He's asking for the city to partner with CYB to make something good for the community, because "Together We Achieve."

- Renee Ledbetter - 2217 Don Pedro Road, Ceres – Chamber of Commerce President

Mrs. Ledbetter explained she has an extensive background in baseball and softball fields, with her kids having played with CYB for the past 15 years and travel ball for more than 10 years. She requested that the Council take the following into consideration when looking at the proposal:

- Where are CYB or Soccer association buying their concessions from? Are they buying local?
- Require organizations that use city facilities, spend at least 5-10% locally. Consider putting that in proposal as well.
- Had a question to CYB or Jeremy; there are many, many ways to generate revenue utilizing this facility. She knows there's revenue that comes in through this facility such as advertising.
- When a tournament is held, are the gates locked? Yes. Who gets the gate fees? Whoever puts on the tournament.
- Concern about exclusivity; not being able to use fields for City event during the February to August 31st time frame.
- Gate fees should be split with the City.
- Concessions - percentage of sales given to City.
- Concern about playing fewer games for price paid.
- Possibility of using Howard Training Center for maintenance, possibly saving money.
- Suggests not allowing outside food to come in, to hopefully generate more revenue.
- When vendors come in (photographers and other vendors selling products), does CYB get a percentage of sales? Yes.

Mrs. Ledbetter commends CYB for all the work that they've done. She would like to encourage that the City have access to park for fundraisers that benefit the City, at all times.

Vice-Mayor Durossette asked Recreation Supervisor, Cambria Pollinger if there was a City event last year that was held at Davis Park in Modesto because the Costa Fields were not available. Cambria explained that yes, there was. She has proposed to CYB President, Mr. Miller that the Union would

like to have the event again this year, and the City will like to have the ability to use fields on July 11th, as all proceeds from the event will go to Recreation scholarships.

- Dave Pratt – resident

Mr. Pratt stated that when he was young, if he and a couple of buddies wanted to play ball or shoot a few hoops, they didn't have to worry about a place to play. Now the fields are locked up and if we don't lock up the ball fields, they'll be damaged; it's a shame.

6:37 P.M. There being no further comments, Mayor Vierra closed the Public Hearing.

After some Council discussion, the following direction was given.

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Move forward with:

1. Return to each of the organizations (CYSO and CYB); extend the contracts as they are for the remainder of the year, to allow time to go through and come to an arrangement.
2. Staff to do an analysis and come back to Council with a plan that addresses the issues.
3. As part of the analysis, explore the option, to include if we're going to give exclusive rights to the fields, whether it be for a period of 8 months or 12 months, the City doesn't pick up any of the costs.

Mayor Vierra conferred with Mr. Wells that in consideration of the time, Item 2 on the agenda will be moved to a future Study Session.

6:53 P.M. There being no further business, Mayor Vierra adjourned the City Council Study Session.

Chris Vierra, Mayor

Ann Montgomery, Acting City Clerk